Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food

Farm & Food Report

Communications Branch, Walter Scott Building
3085 Albert Street, Regina, Canada, S4S 0B1

Saskatchewan

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Week of July 31, 2006

EXPANSION CONFIRMED FOR CLAVET CANOLA PLANT

The Saskatchewan canola industry got a big boost last week with the announcement that Cargill Ltd. is expanding its canola processing plant in Clavet by 25 per cent.

Construction on the project will begin this fall, and is expected to conclude by the spring of 2007. When completed, it will expand the plant's processing capacity to 3,000 metric tonnes per day from its current 2,400-tonne volume.

"We firmly believe that Canada, in particular Saskatchewan, is one of the areas of the world best-suited to an expanding production of vegetable oil in the form of softseeds," said Wayne Teddy, president of Cargill's Grains and Oilseeds Supply Chain business unit for North America.

The investment, he added, will "help better position Cargill and its canola producers as a go-to source in serving the growing global demand for fuel and food applications derived from canola."

The Clavet plant crushes canola for use in margarine, salad oil and other food ingredients. Lower quality grades processed at the facility may be used in biodiesel fuel production.

Located east of Saskatoon, the plant opened in the mid-1990s, and currently employs 50 people. Already one of the largest facilities of its kind in the world, the expansion will build on a success story that has delivered value-added processing to the province's agricultural sector for the past decade.

A major presence on the international grains and oilseed market, Cargill Ltd. operates in 61 countries with 142,000 employees. Its selection of Saskatchewan as a place to expand is a vote of confidence in the province's canola industry and its agricultural producers.

"It is our commitment to expand Cargill's Canadian footprint into those areas that will deliver the greatest value to our farm and end-use customers," noted Cargill Ltd. President Len Penner. Expanding the Clavet facility, he added, will "ensure domestic consumers have access to a reliable, consistent, high quality ingredient for fuel and food."

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WHET YOUR APPETITE FOR THE FIRST ANNUAL "TASTE OF THE SOUTHWEST"

Get ready for the mouth-watering taste sensations of the southwest! We're not referring to tortillas and tacos: we're talking about Saskatchewan's southwest.

A number of partners have come together to create the first annual "Taste of the Southwest" gala that will take place at the Swift Current Exhibition Grounds on August 12. The event is a part of the Fun Fest Weekend in Swift Current.

"We have a lot of unique products that are produced or grown in this region. This is great way to showcase them," said Shawn Hermanson, an Agri-Business Development Specialist with Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food.

More than 14 producers, processors, caterers and restaurants from throughout the region have already signed up, offering a wide variety of tantalizing products, ranging from New York Meat Sticks (the missing link between beef jerky and a hamburger) from Classic Meats of Fox Valley, to cinnamon buns from the House of Heart Café in Cabri.

"We still have space available if there are other producers who want to take part," said Hermanson.

Once your tummy is full of fine southwest fare, you can enjoy the entertainment, or wash it all down in the beer gardens.

The event runs from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. in the Stockade Building at the Swift Current Exhibition Grounds.

The Taste of the Southwest is hosted by a committee consisting of Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, Regional Economic and Co-operative Development, the Southwest REDA, Southwest Community Futures, the Cypress Hills REDA, the Swift Current Agricultural and Exhibition Association, and local producers.

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For more information or to register a food booth, please contact Keleah Herron, Community Economic Development Officer, Southwest REDA, at www.southwestreda.ca or (306) 778-4243.

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EXTENDED AGENDA FOR TENTH ANNUAL WESTERN CANADA FEEDLOT MANAGEMENT SCHOOL

The tenth annual Western Canada Feedlot Management School (WCFMS) will feature more than a dozen in-depth sessions running over four days, July 31 to August 3 at the University of Saskatchewan.

The school is designed for those in the cattle feeding business, considering expansion, or just getting started.

"The school provides a great learning environment because you have people coming from all sides of the business. It's very hands on. You get both classroom type presentations and the opportunity to get out into the feedlot to apply some of that learning in the real world," said Sandy Russell, a beef economist with Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food.

"It's a highly sought after school. Every year we have had full attendance, and it looks like we will be full again this year," said Russell.

Session topics include: *Evaluating Feeding Alternatives to Maximize Profit*, *What Cattle Buyers Look for in Feeder and Slaughter Cattle*, and *Growth Promotion and Implants – How to Maximize Your Gains*.

The WCFMS is a direct response to the need in the cattle industry for knowledgeable feedlot operators who can adapt to changes in production and marketing practices. Experts from industry and the fields of research and development will deliver sessions on topics that are at the forefront of the feeding industry.

The WCFMS is organized by the Saskatchewan Cattle Feeders Association, the University of Saskatchewan Department of Animal and Poultry Science, and Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food.

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SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT "AN INSPIRATION"

"She's an inspiration."

That's how the Executive Director of the Saskatchewan Association of Agriculture Societies and Exhibitions (SAASE) describes the first recipient of the Clark Lewis Memorial Scholarship.

SAASE Executive Director Glen Duck says Andrea Hemsley from Sylvania (southeast of Melfort) was a stand-out among a strong field of contenders.

"We had a very difficult decision in selecting the first recipient of this scholarship. Agriculture societies across the province selected only the best from their regions, so the by the time we had to choose from the final 13 applicants, we were working from a list of outstanding young leaders," said Duck.

Hemsley, who is pursuing an education degree at the University of Regina, is blind.

"Andrea is heavily involved in her community and with the Golburn Agriculture Society. She has been an inspiration to her classmates and her community for how she has faced her disability," said Duck.

The Clark Lewis Memorial Scholarship was created earlier this year to recognize the agricultural leader who passed away in March of 2005. The successful applicant receives $1,500.

Clark Lewis had a long history with SAASE. He was an active board member of the predecessor of SAASE, the Saskatchewan Agricultural Societies Association (SASA), was a member of the Minister's Review Committee in 1986, and served on the steering committee responsible for the amalgamation of the SASA and the Saskatchewan Association of Fairs and Exhibitions. Through numerous re-elections to the board by his peers, and until his retirement in 1995, Clark served on all committees and offices of SAASE.

The legacy of his leadership style of patient perseverance and dedicated service remains with agricultural societies and exhibitions throughout Saskatchewan. It was felt by the SAASE Board of Directors that the immense contributions and dedication of Clark Lewis to the organization could best be honoured through a scholarship bearing his name.

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To fund the award on an ongoing basis, SAASE is soliciting contributions from agricultural societies to form a pool of money from which the interest will be utilized annually. In addition to these donations, SAASE will be using 50/50 lottery revenue, as well as money from a silent auction at its convention, to support the scholarship on a yearly basis.

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For more information, contact:

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SIAST MEETING DEMAND FOR MEAT PROCESSING TRADESPEOPLE

The Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology (SIAST) is offering training courses for a variety of trades needed by the province's expanding meat processing sector.

The closure of the U.S. border to Canadian cattle during the recent BSE crisis was a stark demonstration of Canada's need to enhance its domestic slaughter capacity. With the most stringent border restrictions now lifted, the livestock sector is once again on the rebound, but the need to slaughter and process more of our own livestock remains.

The continued growth in domestic livestock processing is creating a big demand for tradespeople possessing a variety of skills needed in the industry. Unfortunately, there are not enough qualified people to meet that demand.

This has generated increased opportunity – particularly for meat cutters, slaughterers and processors – in several jurisdictions, particularly Saskatchewan. SIAST responded by creating courses to meet the specific needs of the processing industry.

To learn the meat cutter trade through apprenticeship, for example, individuals enrol in a course that has them working 85 per cent of the time (1,800 hours) with a certified journeyperson, earning while they learn. This is followed by 15 per cent (eight weeks) spent studying the technical aspects of the trade at the SIAST Kelsey Campus in Saskatoon. The process is repeated for three years to achieve journeyperson status. SIAST is constantly accepting applications for these courses. The classroom portion begins in August and the practicum begins in January.

"The BSE crisis taught us to put more emphasis on handling our own animals rather than shipping them elsewhere," said Jim Moldenhauer, Chair of the Meat Cutter Trade Board. "Industry expansion opens up great opportunities for Saskatchewan people to build careers in the skilled trades, such as meat cutting, that support this growth."

For more information on the requirements or enrolment process for these courses, contact the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission at 1-877-363-0536 or visit their website at www.saskapprenticeship.com (click on "designated trades").

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For more information, contact:

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